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Robert Rauschenberg

April 1–30, 2005

Opening Reception:
Friday, April 1, 5:30–7:30pm

Gallery Hours:
Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–6pm



Swim / ROCI USA (Wax Fire Works), 1990, acrylic, fire wax, and variegated brass leaf on stainless steel, edition of 22, 72 3/4 x 96 3/4 inches

March 16, 2005, Philadelphia, PA – Locks Gallery will present a selection of large-scale works from Robert Rauschenberg's *ROCI USA (Wax Fire Works)* series—on view from April 1 to April 30, 2005. There will be an opening reception for the exhibition on Friday, April 1, 2005 from 5:30 to 7:30pm. Gallery admission is free and open to the public.

In 1984 Rauschenberg established R.O.C.I. (Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange) with a six-year exhibition tour comprising paintings, sculpture, prints, and objects inspired by the artist's experiences in host countries around the world. Co-organized by the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., ROCI was a landmark event for the artist—placing him in the role of ambassador, promoting cultural awareness while creating what many critics saw as some of the strongest work of his already spectacular career. The project culminated in a comprehensive showing presented in 1991 at the National Gallery of Art that included the *ROCI USA (Wax Fire Works)* series based on images collected by the artist in the United States.

The exhibition at Locks Gallery includes five works from the *ROCI USA (Wax Fire Works)* series as well as two related works from the late 1980s. "Wax Fire Works" refers to the technically innovative method employed by the artist to create these works. Working with his familiar vocabulary of collaged images combined with unexpected surfaces and found objects, the artist developed a technique for applying a silkscreened

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encaustic image to the polished metal surfaces of these works by forcing hot, brightly colored wax through a metal screen. The resulting paintings contain a luminous interplay between the mirror-like finish of the metal surfaces—reflecting a view that changes from every vantage point—and the highly saturated colors of the pigmented wax and traditional acrylic silkscreen images.

One of the most important American artists living today, Rauschenberg's work is included in virtually every museum dedicated to contemporary art. His influence on the development of American art has been enormous as described in an excerpt from the introduction to his 1997 Guggenheim retrospective exhibition catalogue:

In a career that has spanned fifty years, Robert Rauschenberg (b. 1925) has shaped the course of postwar art. His innovations have been made in a spectacular range of mediums—painting and sculpture, silkscreen and lithography, photography and transfer drawing—and have incorporated such unconventional materials as newspaper, cardboard, and found objects. By culling images and materials from the world around him, Rauschenberg has blurred the distinctions between artforms and has broken down the boundaries between art and everyday experience. From the 1950s *Combines*, which fuse painting with sculpture, to the 1990s *Arcadian Retreats*, employing a contemporary fresco process, Rauschenberg's provocative use of media images, photography, and inventive processes has opened up new avenues of expression to his contemporaries.

Locks Gallery is located at 600 Washington Square South in Philadelphia, PA. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm. For additional information, please contact Locks Gallery at 215.629.1000 voice, 215.629.3868 fax, or info@locksgallery.com.

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